Kristin Woodlen

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Foundations of Writing

Dr. Sherry

**My Circle of Life**

As a child, my favorite movie was Disney’s *The Lion King* because I loved the music and the story it told. I liked how the movie revolved around the idea of everything happening at a certain time and place and there is a reason why it happens then, we just don’t know it yet. In the movie, Simba goes through all of these experiences that help shape himself in the final scene, as king, in the movie. I decide to use this movie to help tell my story because I believe that my past and present events will help shape my future and who I will become in the end.

**My Journey Begins**

When I was in high school, I found that I had a fascination for forensics. I read books that talked about famous cases, like Jeffrey Dahlmer, and watched documentaries about famous criminals, like Charles Manson. Although this may sound morbid, I liked learning about them because I was curious about what they did and why they did it. In order to learn more about how forensic analysts catch criminals I took a forensics class in high school. In class, throughout the year, I learned about blood testing, entomology, how a body decomposes, and a bit of profiling. By the end of the year we all had to participate in a lab where we would have to go outside and observe a decomposing dear for a few days.

For me, getting out and observing a real decomposing dear was an experience I will never forget. There were two things about this experiment, one that intrigued me and one that disgusted me. The first thing was the smell. Hands down, this dear had the worst odor ever, imagine a dumpster filled with leftover food in a hot sunny day and then multiply that by ten. The worst part about the day is that it was really windy so you got full blast of the odor, there was no escaping it. The second thing was all of the bugs. Personally, I hate bugs because I hate that most of them travel in large quantities and you can’t get away from them when they are around you. Throughout this experiment, the thing that interested me, however, were the bugs. There were definitely a lot of bug, but none of them came near me or any living human because they were all involved with the dead dear. This interested me because normally bugs are bothersome for anything that lives, but in this case they were only interested in the dead dear.

Before the day of the lab, I worked myself up because I am sensitive to smell and I don’t like bugs. I told myself that I was going to have the worst time, but that was not the case. In fact, I ended up having the best experience ever. During the lab, I got really involved; I took pictures, I collected maggots from inside the dear’s rib cage, and I took the dear’s temperature. I decided that I really wanted to make good use of this experience because I knew that this was never going to happen again. This experiment showed me that I really wanted to peruse a career in forensics, however, I did not want to be anywhere near the bugs again. I knew right away that I had to find some kind of forensics that didn’t deal with bugs, but still had the same hands on activity that my high school lab had.

This moment was the stepping stone that started my career in digital forensics. To me, this moment reminded me of when Simba was told about him being king. Hearing about being future king from his father, Mufasa, reminded me of my forensics teacher, Mrs. Evans, told me about what forensic analysts do in order to help solve cases.

**Life Has Its Ups and Downs**

As a freshman at Bloomsburg University, I decided to major in digital forensics because I liked that I would be able to still look for evidence in order to help with investigative cases and because there were no bugs. My first class of Intro to Digital Forensics class was crazy. In this class my professor, Dr. Barrett, talked about the course and what we would be learning and the careers you can get into with this major. It was like an information overload, but at the same time I was so excited to get started and really start and learn everything there is to know about this major. For weeks I studied and went to class in order to learn as much as I could about digital forensics. I learned about binary, hexadecimal, octal, and other number conversions.

Later on in the school year, Dr. Barrett told us that she was going to give us an examination that tested our knowledge. So until the exam time came I studied really hard and made sure I knew everything I needed to know in order to get a good grade for this test. After I took the test I thought I got at least a B since I studied and thought I knew the answers. The following class we got our grades back and I found out that I didn’t get a B; instead I got a D. Honestly, I was completely devastated because I worked really hard only to get a D. This brought my overall grade in the class down to a C-, which is under the required grade point average for my major. This brought on two questions, should I leave the major and pick another one or should I stay and try to raise my grade. In the end I chose to stay in the Digital Forensics major because I really like the major and I don’t want a bad grade to decide whether I stay in the major or leave the major. I decided that I really like the major I will do whatever it takes in order to get my grade up so I can move forward in the curriculum.

This part of my life reminded me of a section in *The Lion King* where Simba thought he killed his father, Mufasa, and ran away from home. Although he grew up with new friends and had fun with them, he also knew that he was carrying pain and sadness knowing that he ran away, was responsible for his father’s death, and that he wasn’t going to be king anymore. Ultimately, at this part in the movie, I think Simba was really confused and conflicted because he knows he was supposed to be king, but with his father’s death, he doesn’t know if he can be anymore. When I got my D on my first test, I became conflicted and confused, like Simba, because I didn’t know if I could stay in the major and still graduate on time. In the end, I think I made the right decision by staying in the class because I was able to bring my grade up and now I have a passing grade.

**Everything Comes Full Circle**

Now that I have finally graduated from Bloomsburg University and found a career as a Forensic Analyst for the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) I can finally start working on cases. I feel like I have really done something good with my life by going out and getting an education and getting a job. I like the fact that I am helping people by helping find evidence to help solve open investigative cases.

The first time I opened a case file, I felt a jolt of thrill and excitement because I am finally living my dream by working my dream job. I started thinking that all of my hard work in college is paying off and that I deserve to be here. As I was working of my first case, I decided that I want to help inspire others who might want to go into forensics like I did when I was younger. I want to help motivate them when their facing hardships and not feeling motivated by themselves because I feel that everyone needs someone to help boost themselves up.

In the movie, *The Lion King*, Simba, in the end, finally steps up and becomes king of the Pridelands. In the final scene, he is standing with Nala and Rafiki, who is holding a newborn lion cub. Right before the scene ends, Rafiki holds up the newborn lion cub and hold him up like he did when Simba was a newborn cub. This scene meant a lot to me because it showed me that although one story ends, another one begins. For me, my story ends with me solving cases and working a successful career. Hopefully, it is also the beginning other peoples careers. I hope that my cases inspire people to say that they are interested in learning more about forensics and maybe start a career like I did when I was in high school. In my opinion, we all are connected in a big circle of life because when our stories come to a close, someone’s story is always beginning.